



## MARINE AIRCRAFT GROUP 36 COMMANDING OFFICER'S SARC STATEMENT



The safety and well being of our Marines and Sailors is fundamental to our mission. Any attack or assault, especially any incident as vile as a sexual assault, strikes to our very core and impacts every single one of us. We must aggressively seek to prevent these assaults and we must always be prepared to immediately respond to the needs of the victim.

Sexual assaults are criminal acts of violence and aggression used to affect power and control over the victim. Sexual assault can happen to anyone, male or female; however, over 90 percent of identified victims of rape are women. Acts of sexual assault are incompatible with the high standards of professional and personal discipline require of members of the Marine Corps. They impede unit and individual morale, effectiveness, and efficiency and they negatively impair the ability of the Marine Corps to function as a professional team. Marines are our most precious assets. Sexual assault victims have at times been improperly considered responsible for their predicament and are sometimes re-victimized by those in a position to assist. It is my policy that all personnel shall treat every victim with dignity, respect, and sensitivity. They will be protected through fair, conscientious, and unbiased treatment as individuals and continue be viewed as integral service members assigned to this command.

Strong leadership and consistent coordinated action by the entire community is the key to sexual assault prevention and response. Commanders must continuously educate, train and instill awareness in members of their command, while also encouraging victims and witnesses to report these incidents when they occur. Commanders should also take the opportunity to highlight the services available to victims of sexual assault, and send a clear message that perpetrators of these crimes will be held accountable to the fullest extent of the law. Leaders must be aware that Marines who are sexual assault victims are physically, mentally, and emotionally traumatized and wounded. A wounded Marine must never be left on the battlefield.

H. B. MATHEWS II  
Commanding Officer, Marine Aircraft Group 36